

MINUTES
CITY OF WESTMINSTER
Mayor and Common Council Meeting
February 13, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Council Members Present: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, Councilman Pecoraro, and Mayor Utz **Absent:** None.

Staff Present: Director of Public Works Glass, Director of Recreation and Parks Gruber, City Clerk Visocsy, City Attorney Levan, Director of Finance and Administrative Services Palmer, Chief of Police Spaulding, City Administrator Matthews, Manager of Human Resources Childs and Director of Community Planning & Development Mackey.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Wack moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to approve the Mayor and Common Council Meeting Minutes of January 23, 2017.

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

Councilman Wack moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 23, 2017.

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

President Albert requested a motion to approve UPSD Agreement Renewal (TSG Inc.) and the Façade Easement Agreement A- 1099 – City Mural at Locust Lane City Park.

Councilman Wack moved, seconded by Councilwoman Becker, to approve the Consent Calendar, as recommended.

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

Councilman Wack reported that Jason Stambaugh, Executive Director of MAGIC, has taken a position at a local tech firm and will be transitioning to the MAGIC Board of Directors. Mr. Stambaugh's last day as Executive Director for MAGIC will be March 13. Councilman Wack inquired if the Mayor and Common Council would like for Mr. Stambaugh to give a final report before his last day. The Mayor and Council endorsed having Mr. Stambaugh give a final report. Councilman Wack also reported that there will be a Hack-a-Thon event held on February 26 at McDaniel College and a Demo Day event at the Community Media Center on March 22.

President Albert reported that she attended the 138th Annual Banquet at the Westminster Fire Department.

BIDS

Mr. Glass informed the Mayor and Common Council that, after receiving several bids for the water main replacement for Hollow Rock Avenue, City View Avenue, and James Street, the apparent lowest bidder was Mid-Atlantic Utilities. Mr. Glass recommended that the Mayor and Common Council approve the bid in the amount of \$498,390.50 to Mid-Atlantic Utilities.

Councilman Chiavacci moved, seconded by Councilman Pecoraro, to approve the bid for the water main replacement project to Mid-Atlantic Utilities in the amount of \$498,390.50.

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Mackey provided the staff report for the introduction of Resolution No. 17-01 – Annexation No. 69 (City's WWTP). He stated that the City has proposed to annex the City-owned property where the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant is located. The property is comprised of two parcels located in unincorporated Carroll County. One parcel is part of the State Highway Administration's right-of-way for MD 31; the City has contacted the State Highway Administration, and it has no objection to the annexation. Mr. Mackey recommended that the Mayor and Common Council introduce Resolution No. 17-01, Annexation No. 69, for the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Councilman Pecoraro asked if the City owned other property that is not in the City limits. Mr. Glass replied that there are other City-owned properties outside the corporate limits.

Councilman Pecoraro moved, seconded by Councilwoman Becker, to introduce Resolution No. 17-01 - Annexation No. 69 (City's WWTP).

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Matthews provided the staff report for the discussion of a compensation and classification study. She informed the Mayor and Council that the City had not conducted a compensation and classification study since

2006. While there are no standard timeframes for how often such studies should be done, she and Ms. Childs recommended a timeframe of every five to eight years.

Ms. Matthews informed the Mayor and Council that there are a number of reasons to conduct a job classification and compensation study. They include determining whether an organization's pay structure is appropriate given current labor market conditions; making sure the current job classification structure is efficiently structured or if new job classes, mergers of existing classes, or re-titling of positions is warranted; and, evaluating whether current position descriptions accurately represent present day job duties and are legally compliant. Ms. Matthews noted that there have been a number of events since 2006 that make this an appropriate time for the City to undertake a compensation and classification study. These events include the reduction in City staff during the recession, resulting in the restructuring of job duties, and the increase in the State minimum wage.

Ms. Matthews advised the Mayor and Council that the cost of conducting the proposed compensation and classification study would not be known until responses to the Request of Proposals are received. Based on the information from other municipalities in the State who recently undertook such a study, the estimated cost is approximately \$60,000 - \$65,000. To ensure that the City has the benefit of the study results for the FY2019 budget process, Ms. Matthews recommended that the City proceed with issuing a Request for Proposals in the next few months. The study would be funded with a portion of the proceeds from the claims reimbursement check that the City has received as a result of its participation in the Local Government Insurance Trust Health Cooperative; she also noted that a budget amendment would be required. Ms. Matthews concluded the staff report by sharing that the Personnel Committee discussed this matter on February 6, 2017 and unanimously expressed support for staff's recommendation to undertake the study.

Councilman Chiavacci stated that he was part of the Personnel Committee meeting and supports doing a Compensation and Classification study. He agreed with the changes since 2006 and would like to move forward with the study. Councilman Wack commented that the City has undergone significant organizational changes in the past five years and that the City is not the same as it was 11 years ago. Councilman Wack stated that the City will need to address the impact on its budget as any salary adjustments will be a permanent change in the City's operating costs.

Councilman Pecoraro inquired if there were any guidelines or standards on the typical financial impact of implementing the results of such studies. Ms. Matthews replied that each situation was different, with a greater financial impact likely if it had been a while since a study was done. She further stated that there are different ways to implement the results of a compensation and classification study, including who receives the increases and whether or not any adjustments are phased in. These decisions will be made by the Mayor and Council.

Councilman Wack suggested looking at employee benefits as a factor when doing the study. Ms. Matthews agreed, adding that when looking at other cities and their salary structure, it makes sense to look at the benefit side of the equation as well.

Councilman Chiavacci moved, seconded by Councilwoman Becker, to approve City staff moving forward with the Compensation and Classification Study, as recommended.

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

President Albert requested a motion to hold an Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting to consider the acquisition of real property for public purpose and matters directly related thereto; and to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

Councilman Pecoraro moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to hold an Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting.

VOTE

AYES: Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

NAYS: None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Ms. Matthews thanked Mr. Cumberland and staff for the tour of the Westminster Fire Department. Mr. Cumberland reported that during the month of January, the Westminster Fire Department had 145 calls and 453 EMS calls.

Mr. Mackey reported that there will be a public hearing during the February 27 Mayor and Common Council meeting for Ordinance No. 873 – Indoor Dog Training and Event facility. On March 27, there will be a public hearing for Annexation No. 68 for the Feeser property. Mr. Mackey also reported that during 2017, the Comprehensive Plan will be under review as required by the Maryland Planning and Zoning Department. The City's Planning and Zoning Commission will be reviewing each chapter to give recommendations. There will also be an upcoming meeting with the Public Works Department and Carroll County Planning Department for the tri-annual update for the Carroll County water/sewer plan.

Chief Spaulding updated the Mayor and Common Council on recent sexual assault cases in Westminster. He reported that the case at the Wakefield Valley trail was being investigated by the Carroll County Sheriff's Department and that he has been in contact with them daily. The sexual assault case at McDaniel College is also still under investigation, and the Westminster Police Department is working with the Department of Campus Safety at the college. Chief Spaulding stated that police officers have increased their presence in both areas. He encourages the community to remain aware of their surroundings and to call the police when anyone looks suspicious.

Ms. Palmer reported that she and City staff had begun the budget process. She will be meeting with the Directors and the Finance Committee regarding the budget. Ms. Palmer then reported that an RFP was being sent out for water and sewer rates. She also shared that all departments, except for the Police Department, currently has purchase cards and they have had a successful first month of use.

Mr. Glass reported that Phase 1 of the fiber project is complete and ready for connection. Phase 2 will continue at the Greens of Westminster and then move toward Wakefield Valley. Mr. Glass then reported that on February 9, there was a sewer main break.

Ms. Gruber shared that that Recreation and Parks Department has received 500 runner registrations for the March Celtic Canter, as well as a dozen vendor applications. The City has also sold over 30 tickets for the Wine Stroll and has 12 vendors registered for that April event. Additionally, Recreation and Parks has 83 vendors registered for the Flower and Jazz Festival in May. Ms. Gruber also reported that summer camp registration has begun and the Community Garden letters had been sent out for the community garden plots. Finally, the Show Some Love Westminster Facebook contest will begin on February 14.

Ms. Childs reported that Executive Director of LGIT would be attending the next Council meeting to present a reimbursement check for FY2016. Ms. Childs also invited Mayor and Common Council to join the BGE Electrical Demonstration for safety day on June 1.

Ms. Matthews reported that during the Personnel Committee Meeting, it was discussed to do a Mayoral Proclamation for public service recognition week. The Committee also discussed modifying the employee service program for those who are at 10 years of service, or more, to provide them with a bonus check, rather than a gift. Additionally, Ms. Matthews suggested that rather than presenting employee service awards during the employee picnic, to have them presented during the holiday party and have the picnic as an appreciation social event. Mayor and Common Council gave Ms. Matthews a consensus on all items above.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Amy Wallace, 54 West Green Street, expressed her concerns about the recent sexual assault cases. She shared that she is beginning to feel unsafe when walking by herself in the City. Ms. Wallace suggested that the community come together to form a safety task force to make Westminster safe again. Chief Spaulding shared how the Westminster Police Department is addressing the recent sexual assault cases, as well as the groups that the Department partners with on an ongoing basis to protect the community. Councilman Chiavacci stated that he likes the idea of engaging and partnering with the community in public safety matters.

Richard Huss, 947 Westcliff Ct, shared that there is an app called Nextdoor that is good for community outreach.

Katie Carter, West Green Street, shared that she used the Nextdoor app when she lived in the Baltimore area and likes the idea of forming a community safety task force. She felt that it is important for the City to get ahead of this issue now.

Ann Gilbert, 45 Chase Street, shared that she has lived in her home for 50 years and has had issues with kids who hang around King Park committing crime. She also was in support of the proposed community task force.

Councilman Wack commented that the kids who are committing the crimes live somewhere within the Westminster community. He agreed that the Nextdoor app or something similar could be useful. Councilman Wack also shared that majority of the problems in the City are related to substance abuse and mental health problems. Mayor Utz commented that safety is a matter of perception and that each community member will need to determine at what level they feel safe.

Beth Hardsock, 140 E Main Street, shared that she runs in the evenings and noted certain dark spots where she feels lighting could be improved. She also noted that those who rent their homes don't take pride in their properties in the same way as those who own their homes. Councilman Wack shared that the City's rental licensing program is currently being reevaluated and is a work in progress. Mayor Utz stated that the City is doing as much as possible to improve the City.

Lyndi McNulty, 195 W Main Street, shared her concerns about safety in the City due to the recent crimes committed in her area.

Janice Kispert, representing the Rape Crisis Intervention Center, 224 North Center Street, applauded Chief Spaulding and the Westminster Police Department for their work. She encouraged victims to reach out to the rape crisis center.

Pamela Zappardino, President of the Rape Crisis Intervention Center, 224 N. Center Street, shared that sexual assault is among the least reported crimes. She commented that it needs to begin with the little cases and to teach rapists not rape.

Sharon Yingling, 309 Denton Drive, commented that rape is a crime of violence against women.

Councilman Wack thanked everyone for coming out and asked everyone to continue to be engaged. Mayor Utz stated that he is committed to keeping every citizen safe.

ADJOURNMENT

President Albert adjourned the meeting at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Visocsy

Full audio version is available on www.westminstermd.gov.